



FEATURED BY ARTSY

Paintings by John Evans Make Us Question, Has Man Made Nature Better?

 ARTSY EDITORIAL
2 MINUTES AGO

John Evans is a painter of nature who does not faithfully render what he sees. More interested in capturing and conveying the impressions of life, the painter has a strong affinity for the elements of nature that mankind has remade.

"I visualize the world as a series of collages made of natural forms and concrete structures," says Evans, who is known for lyrical, semi-abstract paintings of land- and seascapes. Gallery Henoch has been showing the artist since the early 1980s, and now presents its 11th exhibition of his work. Featuring paintings he has produced over the past five years, the exhibition introduces a new direction in his art. These oil-on-canvas compositions were sparked by his visit to Palm Beach, Florida's botanical gardens, where he became mesmerized in particular by the delicate water gardens. While he often works panoramically, in these paintings he offers closer views of the manicured ponds and their lush flora and, sometimes, the flash of a fish beneath.

Rather than realistically reproducing the scenes that inspire him, Evans works by distilling them down to their most essential elements, the better to capture their visual nuances and the feelings they evoke. Describing the works included in the exhibition, he states: "In these paintings, I take apart each image and re-image the parts." This is evident, for example, in a sweeping painting titled *The Feast of the Mandarin* (2014). The composition is a feast of aquatic plants and flowers. Lotuses, water lilies, and lily pads bloom upon the picture plane from end to end, some represented as pared-down geometric shapes, others rendered in more detail and complete with irregular, growing edges touched by color. They sit upon a pondscape made up of patches of grays, browns, and blues, indicative of the shifting hues of the water, which takes up the color of whatever it reflects.

In other, smaller paintings, the orange and gold bodies of koi rhythmically punctuate the surface—of both the painting itself and, we imagine, the water as Evans stared down into it. They pop against the murky tones of the water in which they swim, jewel-like presences brighter than they might appear in real life, just as the artist intended.

—Karen Kedmey

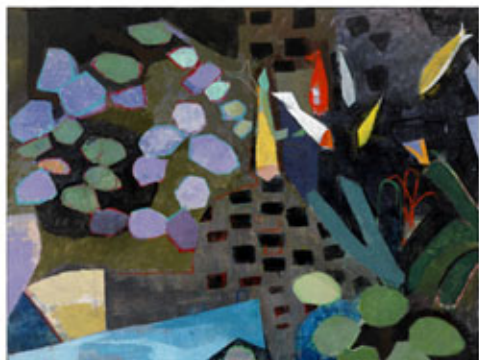
"John Evans: New Paintings" is on view at Gallery Henoch, New York, Mar. 5–28, 2015.



John Evans (American, born 1945)
Dreaming of You, 2014



John Evans (American, born 1945)
Smelling the Moon In Your Perfume, 2014



John Evans (American, born 1945)
Meditation Of The Bird, 2014